



Essential Question: How do you stay safe when you visit websites?

Learning Overview and Objectives

Overview: Students understand that they should stay safe online by choosing websites that are good for them to visit, and avoid sites that are not appropriate for them.

First, students learn about the similarities of staying safe in the real world and when visiting websites. Next, they learn about the website traffic light and complete an activity where they match statements about websites to the correct safety level of the site. Then they play an interactive game and consider how to determine which websites are just right for them.

objectives

Students will:

- Understand that being safe when they visit websites is similar to staying safe in real life
- Learn to recognize websites that are good for them to visit
- Recognize if they should ask an adult they trust before they visit a particular website

Materials and Preparation

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Materials

- **Website Traffic Light Student Handout**
- Piece of long string or tape
- Red, yellow, and green markers or crayons

Preparation

- Copy the **Website Traffic Light Student Handout**, one for each student

Parent Resources

- Send parents the **Internet Safety for Elementary School Kids Tip Sheet** and the **Safe Online Talk for Elementary Students Parent Tip Sheet**

Key Vocabulary

- **Safe:** Free from danger or harm
- **Caution:** To be careful
- **Right:** Something that's appropriate and fitting

teaching plans

Introduce

ASK *What does it mean to be safe?*

TEACH the Key Vocabulary word safe.



ASK *When you walk down the street or play in your neighborhood without a trusted adult there, how do you stay safe?*

Gather all responses from students, but highlight these points:

- Don't go to places you don't know
- Don't talk to strangers
- Stay out of trouble
- Follow the rules

TELL students that just as they should stay safe in the real world, they should stay safe when they go into the online world (visiting websites). Make parallels between the answers students gave you about their neighborhood and the online world.

Sample responses:

- Don't go on websites without a trusted adult's permission
- Only go to websites that an adult says are okay to visit
- Talk only to people you know
- Follow your family's rules about the computer

EXPLAIN to students that one way they can keep safe online is by using the website traffic light. A regular traffic light tells people who are driving cars when they need to go, slow down, or stop. In the same way, the website traffic light tells people who are visiting websites whether or not it's okay to go somewhere.

Teach 1: Introduce the Website Traffic Light

DRAW a website traffic light on the whiteboard using the illustration from the **Website Traffic Light Student Handout**.

TEACH the Key Vocabulary word **right**. Explain to students that the website traffic light will help them choose sites that are just **right** for them.

EXPLAIN to students the meaning of the green, yellow, and red traffic lights. Use the talking points below.

Green – GOOD! A “green” website is:

- A good site for kids your age to visit
- Fun, with things for you to do and see
- A site that is just right for you
- **GOOD!** Look for sites that are “green” and bookmark them so you can visit your favorites! (You may have to explain and demonstrate how to bookmark a site.)

ASK *What are some “green” websites you visit? How do you know they're safe and just right for you? Guide students to share websites they visit, exploring how they are “green” sites.)*

Yellow – CAUTION! (Define the Key Vocabulary word caution. A “yellow” website is:

- A site you are not sure is right for you
- One that asks for information such as who you are, where you live, your phone number or email address, etc.
- A place where you are allowed to communicate freely with others
- **CAUTION!** Before you go to a site you think is yellow, get permission from adult you trust.

ASK *Have you ever come across a “yellow” site? How did you take caution? (Guide students to name sites they have encountered that they were unsure about visiting, and have them share their experiences.)*



Red – STOP! A red site is:

- A site that is not right for you
- A place you might have gone to by accident
- Filled with things that are for older kids or adults
- **STOP!** Avoid a site you think is “red.” If you’re unsure, ask a trusted adult

ASK *Have you ever been to a “red” website you knew was not right for you? How could you tell?* (Guide students to share sites they might have visited that were inappropriate for them. Keep in mind they may have visited these sites either deliberately or accidentally. Invite them to share strategies they used to avoid the site, such as clicking the back button, closing the page, or telling an adult about it.)

Teach 2: Go, Caution, Stop! Use the Website Traffic Light

DISTRIBUTE the **Website Traffic Light Student Handout**, one per student.

READ ALOUD the handout instructions. Have students work together in pairs or small groups to complete the handout.

INVITE students to share answers to each statement on the handout. The correct answers are:

1. This site is just right for me. (GREEN)
2. I should get permission from an adult I trust. (YELLOW)
3. There are fun things for me to do and see. (GREEN)
4. This site is not right for me. (RED)
5. I’d like to go there, but I should be cautious. (YELLOW)
6. The site has things for older kids or adults, but not for me. (RED)

Teach 3: Play the Website Traffic Light Game

Have students line up in a row on one side of the room. Place a string or piece of tape as a line on the floor on the opposite side of the room where you’ll stand, parallel to the students’ row. You’ll be playing a game similar to the popular “Red Light, Green Light” children’s game. **INTRODUCE** students to the rules of the game.

For each green website, you move forward two steps.

For each yellow site, you move forward one step.

For each red site, you can’t move.

If you get an answer wrong (i.e., you move the wrong amount of steps), you must go back to where you stood before and take one step back.

READ ALOUD each of the following statements about pretend websites students might visit. After each statement, students take the amount of steps they think is correct. Reveal the correct answer after each statement, prompting students to explain why something is red, yellow, or green. The students who make it to the line at the front of the room first are the winners.

- *You went to the games-o-rama website by accident and a stranger asks you your name and age. (RED, no steps)*



- *The Wacky Bunny site is funny! Even your grandma would think it's just right. (GREEN, forward two steps)*
- *You are searching for pictures of hearts but come across a site that makes you feel uncomfortable. (RED, no steps)*
- *A site for your favorite TV show has fun things for kids your age to do. (GREEN, forward two steps)*
- *There's a kids sports site you visited and it allows people to chat with each other. (YELLOW, forward one step)*
- *You're on a game site where a screen pops up and asks for your email address. (YELLOW, forward one step)*
- *Your teacher tells you to visit a site where you can learn things about giraffes. (GREEN, forward two steps)*

REMINDE students after the game that just as they stay safe by following traffic lights, they should aim to stay safe online by choosing sites that are just right for them. They should also ask an adult for permission to visit a site they think is yellow, and avoid visiting sites that are red.

Wrap Up and Assess

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives.

- *How is staying safe in your neighborhood and staying safe online similar? (Guide students to explain the similarities. For instance, in both worlds they don't talk to strangers, don't go places they're not familiar with, and stay out of trouble.)*
- *How does the website traffic light help you stay safe online? (Guide students to remember that when they visit websites, they can use the traffic light to help them make a decision about whether a site is just right for them. Emphasize that they should always ask an adult they trust if they are unsure whether a site is right.)*



Extension Activity

In groups, have students create a website traffic light poster. On a large sheet of paper, students draw a traffic light. Within each light, have students write tips to explain what a green, yellow, or red website is. Hang the posters in the classroom and point out all the ways that students can choose "green" sites that are just right for them.



Homework

With a family member, students find three new "green" sites they can visit. They explain to their family member how these are safe sites that are just right for them. Students can write down the names of those websites and post them by the computer, or bookmark them in their Web browser.

Alignment with Standards – National Educational Technology Standards for Students® 2007

(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007)

1. Creativity and Innovation

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes

4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation



d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions

5. Digital Citizenship

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology
- b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity
- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

- a. understand and use technology systems
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively

Common Sense Media is an independent, nonprofit resource that helps families and educators teach kids how to be safe and smart in today's 24/7 media world. Go to www.commonsense.org for thousands of reviews and expert advice.